

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 146450

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 146450

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CB

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORT RE CAMBODIAN GUNBOAT

1. WE WOULD APPRECIATE COMMENT ON UPI REPORT QUOTED BELOW AND WHICH HAS ALSO BEEN CARRIED IN PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, IN ORDER REPLY TO POSSIBLE PRESS AND CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRIES.

2. BEGIN QUOTE. PHNOM PENH (UPI) -- A CAMBODIAN NAVY GUNBOAT BEING USED ILLEGALLY TO SMUGGLE FOOD TO SOUTH VIETNAM WAS BLASTED OUT OF THE MEKONG RIVER SATURDAY NIGHT BY COMMUNIST GUNFIRE 10 MILES SOUTHEAST OF PHNOM PENH, MILITARY SOURCES SAID SUNDAY. ELEVEN PEOPLE WERE REPORTED KILLED ABOARD THE FLAMING VESSEL, TWO OTHERS WERE MISSING AND 10 WERE WOUNDED. THE SOURCES SAID THE GUNBOAT WAS TRYING TO SNEAK DOWNRIVER IN THE DARK WITH A LOAD OF SUGAR, RICE AND OTHER SUPPLIES DESTINED FOR SOUTH VIETNAM. THESE FOODSTUFFS ARE FREQUENTLY SCARCE IN PHNOM PENH, WHICH GETS MOST OF THEM VIA DANGEROUS UPRIVER CONVOY. BUT THE FOODSTUFFS ALWAYS BRING A GOOD PRICE IN SOUTH VIETNAM. IMPROPER USE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT IS A BANE OF THE CAMBODIAN ARMED FORCES. END QUOTE. SISCO

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Message Attributes

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